

Application No. 09/708,235
Amendment dated March 27, 2006
Reply to Office Action of June 24, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A system for creating and distributing a series of individualized multimedia messages over a computer network to a plurality of recipients, comprising:
 - (a) a recipient information repository with unique recipient information for at least a first and second recipient;
 - (b) a multimedia content repository with computer files comprising at least one of text and graphics files, and further comprising at least one of audio and video files; and
 - (c) means for creating and delivering individualized multimedia content over said computer network to each of the plurality of recipients, wherein said multimedia content is assembled from selected elements within the multimedia content repository which are selected in response to individual information about each of said recipients whose individual information is extracted from the recipient information repository.

2. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the means for creating and delivering individualized multimedia content over said network comprises a computer operatively coupled to said network for executing a programmed sequence of instructions which assemble said computer files from the multimedia content repository as selected according to said individual information about one of said recipients, as

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extracted from said recipient information repository, into a multimedia stream containing said computer files delivered to said recipient.

3. (Previously presented) A system for creating and delivering a series of individualized multimedia messages over a computer network, comprising:
 - means for accessing information about an intended recipient with unique recipient information for at least a first and second recipient;
 - means for personalizing a multimedia message with computer files comprising at least one of text and graphics files and at least one of audio and video files for the intended recipient based upon information about a particular intended recipient; and
 - means for delivering the multimedia message over the computer network to the intended recipient.

4. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 3, wherein the means for accessing information about an intended recipient comprises a data access routine within a programmed set of instructions being executed within a computer, the data access routine for manipulating a database, local or remote, to extract information about a recipient.

5. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 4, further comprising an administration for monitoring and facilitating the creation of multimedia content within a multimedia campaign and includes routines of viewing/playing content, uploading content, searching content, and organizing multimedia content.

6. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 5, wherein the administration routines are for creating and maintaining database and directory structures.
7. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 5, further comprising file conversion routines for converting file formats within the system and for delivery to clients.
8. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 5, further comprising a clean up routine for selective clean up of a recipient database by removing errors and unwanted redundancies.
9. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 5, further comprising an archiving routine for saving files and associations within a particular campaign into an archive from which the campaign may be later restored and executed.
10. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 3, wherein the means for personalizing the multimedia message for the intended recipient comprises a multimedia engine routine within a programmed set of instructions being executed within a computer, the multimedia engine routine for assembling multimedia elements from a content database into a multimedia message in response to information about the intended recipient.

11. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 3, wherein the means for delivering individualized multimedia message content to the intended recipients, comprises a delivery routine within a programmed set of instructions being executed within a computer that is operatively connected to a computer network, the delivery routine for formatting the individualized multimedia message content for the intended recipient and for subsequently delivering the individualized multimedia message over the network for the intended recipient, wherein the message for the intended recipient may be delivered directly to the recipient, or delivered indirectly through one or more systems which direct the individualized multimedia message to the recipient.

12. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 11, wherein the individualized multimedia message is delivered to each of the recipients as an email message which includes multimedia content has text and graphics files and at least one of video and audio files in a format selected from the group of multimedia formats consisting of FlashTM, Real AudioTM, Quick TimeTM, Windows MPTM, SWF, SWT, JavaTM, HTML/Embedded, animated GIF, and 3DTM.

13. (Original) A system as recited in claim 11, wherein the formatted individualized multimedia message is delivered to the recipient as an email message that plays automatically when the recipient clicks on the message.

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14. (Original) A system as recited in claim 13, wherein the individualized multimedia message is delivered to the recipient, comprising markup language coding into which multimedia elements are operatively linked to play as the markup language is executed.
15. (Original) A system as recited in claim 13, wherein the markup language coding is selected from the group of markup languages consisting of SGML, XML, and HTML.
16. (Original) A system as recited in claim 11, wherein the individualized multimedia message is formatted for delivery to the recipient as an email message containing a unique URL link that when activated retrieves the individualized multimedia message content.
17. (Original) A system as recited in claim 16, wherein the activation of the unique URL link comprises execution of a first routine to collect individualized data and a second routine to display the individualized multimedia message content.
18. (Original) A system as recited in claim 11, wherein the individualized multimedia message is formatted for downloading to the recipient as a monolithic file, such as FlashTM, Real AudioTM, Quick TimeTM, Windows MPTM, SWF, SWT, JavaTM, HTML/Embedded, animated GIF, 3DTM, MPEG, MP4, or JPEG file, that may be either viewed or played by the recipient utilizing conventional players or viewers to access the message.

19. (Original) A system as recited in claim 11, wherein the individualized multimedia message may be converted to a format compatible with a graphic printer, such that individualized graphic output may be generated.

20. (Previously presented) A system for creating and distributing individualized multimedia messages over a computer network, comprising:

- (a) a computer operatively connected to said network and executing a programmed sequence of instructions;
- (b) a recipient information access routing within said programmed sequence of instructions for accessing data about a given intended recipient with unique recipient information for at least a first and second recipient;
- (c) a content repository containing multimedia elements that may be combined to form individualized messages with computer files comprising at least one of text and graphics files, and further comprising at least one of audio and video files;
- (d) a content management routine within said programmed sequence of instructions for retrieving selected multimedia content from the content repository, wherein the process of selecting multimedia content is responsive to information content regarding the given recipient accessed by the recipient information access routine;
- (e) a multimedia engine routine within said programmed sequence of instructions, for packaging the multimedia content as an individualized message for delivery to the given recipient; and
- (f) a delivery routine within said programmed sequence of instructions for delivering the individualized message to the given recipient.

21. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content repository comprises a structured database having a directory hierarchy.
22. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the recipient information is accessed within said programmed sequence of instructions using SQL, SAP and XML.
23. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the delivery routine is configured to deliver the multimedia message through a network for receipt on a media selected from the group of media consisting of email, WAP enabled devices, wireless devices, interactive TV, media files, and printed media.
24. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the delivery routine prepares the multimedia content for delivery in a specific delivery format.
25. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 24, wherein the delivery routine further comprises synchronization routines for synchronizing different multimedia streams, such as the synchronization of audio and video streams.
26. (Original) A system as recited in claim 24, wherein the delivery format provides a mechanism for servicing data queries.

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27. (Original) A system as recited in claim 24, wherein the specific delivery format is selected from the group of delivery formats consisting of: FlashTM, Real AudioTM, Quick TimeTM, Windows MPTM, SWF, SWT, JavaTM, HTML/Embedded, animated GIF, 3DTM, and wireless.

28. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the delivery format is capable of being converted for output to a printer so that the individualized multimedia message may be printed out as individualized graphics and text on a printing device.

29. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the recipient information is extracted from a client database.

30. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the multimedia messaging system is directly interfaced to the client system with a data exchange protocol through which the recipient information may be extracted.

31. (Original) A system as recited in claim 30, wherein the exchange protocol utilized is selected from a group of exchange protocols consisting of ODBC, and XML.

32. (Original) A system as recited in claim 30, wherein a custom interface is created for interfacing the multimedia messaging system with the client database.

33. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the information about the intended recipient comprises a user name and an associated email address, so that the multimedia content may be customized with the user name and delivered to the email address of the recipient which is associated with the user name.

34. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the delivery routine is configured to deliver the multimedia content to the intended recipient as an email message through a client routine that is supplied with data comprising the recipient's name, email address and a unique URL pointing to the message content, wherein the client routine is then capable of deploying the email message with the URL.

35. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 34, wherein the delivery routine is further configured for delivery of the multimedia content to play spontaneously when highlighted within the recipient's email in-box.

36. (Original) A system as recited in claim 35, wherein the email messages are deployed within an email campaign, said email campaign comprising a content database, and a list of recipients with associated personalization information.

37. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 36, further comprising an archiving routine for storing and retrieving email campaigns.

38. (Original) A system as recited in claim 37, wherein the archiving routine is capable of storing all files and structures relating to a specific campaign, such that a completed campaign that has been archived may later be restored for further development or use.
39. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the client interface of the content management routine comprises a graphical user interface which displays information and allows for direct client input.
40. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content management routine further comprises routines for directing content uploading, and the customization of the content database.
41. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content management routine further comprises routines for providing file security for a campaign which restricts non-authorized parties from accessing a client campaign.
42. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content management routine further comprises a comprehensive search engine for use on the content repository.

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43. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the search engine further comprises a Thesaurus that is capable of looking up files in response to a set of keywords.
44. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content management routine further comprises version control routines for managing file check-in and check-out by clients accessing the system.
45. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein each of the elements of content being uploaded is represented on a screen and each element may be labeled by the client.
46. (Original) A system as recited in claim 44, wherein labeling of a content element comprises adding a filename, description, and a keyword list.
47. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 20, further comprising a reporting routine for real-time reporting of content and usage statistics.
48. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 47, wherein the reporting routine is adapted for further providing information on click-rate, click-tracking, sales, customer profiles, and use patterns.

49. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the multimedia content comprises graphics, animations, audio, and text which are utilized singly or in combinations thereof.
50. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the content management routine further comprises a routine for synchronizing combinations of graphics, audio, and text for presentation to the given recipient.
51. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the multimedia engine routine further comprises a routine for modifying the individualized message content, such as the offer, discount, coupon, or rebate, after the campaign has been deployed, wherein individualized messages viewed or played after the modification will reflect the modifications.
52. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the delivery routine further comprises a routine for collecting delivery and personal information about an additional recipient wherein the message may be re-individualized and delivered as word-of-mouth style advertising to the additional recipient.
53. (Original) A system as recited in claim 52, wherein the routine for collecting the delivery and personal information further collects optional information from the original recipient, such as recommendations, and an improved subject line.

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54. (Original) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the packaged multimedia content is delivered to the given recipient within an email message.

55. (Previously presented) A method of creating and distributing individualized multimedia messages over a computer network, comprising:

retrieving information about an intended message recipient from a recipient database using a computer;

personalizing a multimedia message for said recipient based on the retrieved information using a computer with unique recipient information for at least a first and second recipient and the multimedia message including computer files comprising at least one of text and graphics files, and further comprising at least one of audio and video files; and

delivering the multimedia message to said recipient over a computer network.

56. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, wherein the information about the intended recipient comprises a user name and an associated email address.

57. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, wherein the individualized multimedia message is assembled from multimedia segments which are selectively extracted from a content database.

58. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, further comprising providing the client with the ability to upload, search, and manage the multimedia content contained within the content database.

59. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, further comprising providing the ability to archive email campaigns, which can later be restored for additional development or deployment.

60. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, wherein the delivery of the multimedia message to said recipient is performed by sending emails to the recipients, wherein a unique URL is embedded in each email which points to stored message content, wherein upon the client opening the email the URL is activated and the individualized multimedia message is played for the client.

61. (Original) A method as recited in claim 60, wherein the email is delivered in a format capable of playing spontaneously when the email message is highlighted in the recipient's in-box or selected for opening.

62. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, wherein the delivery of the multimedia message to said recipient is performed by providing the client with the recipient's name, email address and a unique URL pointing to the message content, wherein the client then deploys the email message with the URL.

63. (Original) A method as recited in claim 55, further comprising providing a database structure and directory structure for retrieving and processing multimedia files to be used in an email campaign.

64. (Canceled)

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71. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the unique individual information is contained within the at least one of audio and video files, and the at least one of text and graphics files.

72. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 3, wherein there is unique individual information contained within the at least one of audio and video files, and the at least one of text and graphics files.

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73. (Previously presented) A system as recited in claim 20, wherein there is unique individual information contained within the at least one of audio and video files, and the at least one of text and graphics files.
74. (Previously presented) A method as noted in claim 55, wherein the unique recipient information is provided within the at least one of audio and video files and the at least one of text and graphics files.
75. (Newly presented) A system as noted in claim 34, wherein the unique URL is determined based on a prior unique URL for the same recipient.
76. (Newly presented) A method as noted in claim 60, wherein the unique URL is determined based on a prior unique URL for the same recipient.
77. (Newly presented) A system as noted in claim 34, wherein the unique URL is correlated with unique content in the message for the same recipient.
78. (Newly presented) A method as noted in claim 60, wherein the unique URL is correlated with unique content in the message for the same recipient.